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Congress of the United States
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TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

1212

December 9, 2013

The Honorable Thomas Wheeler
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St SW
Washington, DC 20554-0004

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

I write regarding recent reports filed with the FCC that appear to show that a growing percentage of 9-1-1 calls made from wireless phones do not contain required location information with 9-1-1 operators. This data, collected from multiple states across the country, indicates that the problem may extend nationwide.

As you know, in 1996, the FCC began adopting rules aimed at ensuring that first responders could more easily locate wireless callers dialing 9-1-1. Specifically, the FCC's Phase II E9-1-1 rules in 2001 required the delivery of latitude and longitude of the caller. These rules took effect more than 10 years ago, yet these reports appear to show that the share of wireless 9-1-1 calls accompanied by accurate information and delivered to emergency operators is dropping across all carriers.

An increasing number of 9-1-1 calls are being placed from wireless phones, with some estimates as high as 70 percent. Moreover, a growing percentage of these wireless calls are made from indoors or other areas where GPS signals are compromised. These trends highlight the need for the FCC to examine closely all of the data from across the country that was filed in this proceeding, to enforce existing rules, and to take additional action where necessary.

I am encouraged that the FCC conducted a workshop "to discuss recent developments in the use of wireless technology to contact emergency services and the provision and quality of 911 location information delivered to Public Safety Access Points." I look forward to learning what steps the commission plans to take to address this critical issue.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to enhancing the quality and reliability of 9-1-1 services across the nation.

Sincerely,

Howard

HOWARD COBLE
Member of Congress

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

February 28, 2014

The Honorable Howard Coble
U.S. House of Representatives
2188 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Coble:

Thank you for your letter regarding location accuracy requirements for E911 calls placed from wireless devices – particularly calls made from indoor locations. As you point out, Americans are increasingly relying on their wireless phones, and rightfully expect that their emergency calls will bring the help that they need. When the original E911 rules for wireless providers were first adopted, they were built on the assumption that the primary place consumers would use their wireless phones would be outside. But today, the vast majority of wireless calls are made from indoors, including 911 calls made from wireless phones.

In our ongoing rulemaking proceeding on E911 location accuracy, we have been exploring ways to ensure that the Commission's rules keep pace with technology and wireless 911 calling trends, including the increase in wireless calls from indoor locations. Last week at the FCC's February 20 agenda meeting, the Commission unanimously adopted a *Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking* in this proceeding. The *Further Notice* will seek comment on a proposal that wireless providers meet certain benchmarks for indoor location accuracy and proposes other changes to ensure that wireless providers are taking the appropriate steps to deliver accurate location information to 911 call centers.

I appreciate your interest in this matter. We will include your letter in the record of this proceeding for full Commission consideration. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Tom Wheeler